the cause of the accident was, that the sleeper-walls were placed the wrong way of the arches.

Mr. Edward Woods, Engineer, called in by the Coroner to assist in the examination, said,—

"He was of opinion that the workmanship of the arches was executed with proper care. The bricks were good. The joints were close. The piers had been built in good cement. But the mortar of the arches had not properly set. That the accident is mainly attributable to the unseasoned condition of the mortar of the arches at the time the pressure came upon them. The mortar was saturated with moisture, and had consequently little cohesive power, and little capacity to sustain compression. That the sleeper-walls being built along the haunches of the principal arches, the weight of the flooring and its load exerted its pressure upon the haunches of the arches only. That this pressure tended to depress the haunches and to raise the crown. The soft state of the mortar and the thickness of the brickwork presented but a slight resistance to such a compression. That the arch was consequently fractured across inwards. That the next arch was left unbalanced, and the intermediate piers were consequently overthrown. That the amount of pressure which caused the accident would not suffice to account for the failure of the arch had the mortar been properly consolidated. That, considering the then existing condition of the mortar, and also having regard to the general construction of the building, it would have been a prudent and necessary precaution to have slackened the centres uniformly and gradually over the entire area, and not removing any of the centres until the mortar had become thoroughly dry, and had compacted the brickwork into a solid mass. That this premature removal of the centres, taken in connection with the circumstances adverted to, namely, the greenness of the mortar, the thickness of the arch, and the mode of the distribution of the pressure upon its surface, would conspire to cause the accident. The mortar was of fair, ordinary quality."

Mr. Risbton, one of the borough surveyors, concurred in Mr. Woods' evidence.

The jury, after three hours' deliberation, brought in a verdict of "accidental death," and made the following presentment:—

"That Philip Code is highly blameable for allowing the centres to be removed from the upper arches without previously applying for, and obtaining, the express permission of Mr. Picton, the more especially as he had expressed an opinion that he considered it dangerous to remove the centres till the whole of the building was completed; that he was also blameable for not requiring of Mr. Mackarell to supply new centres for the new arch, according to the specifications.

That Mr. Mackarell is not without blame, in failing to provide the necessary centering to carry on the works, agreeably with the specification.

Neither do the jury consider the Corn Exchange Committee entirely free from blame, and that it is a practice much to be censured that public bodies take the lowest tenders for work, without regard to the means of the parties to carry that work to completion.

That the jury exonerate Mr. Picton from blame, in reference to the removal of the centres of the upper arches, believing that his permission to remove any of the centres was specifically limited to the lower arches."

THE MEDIÆVAL BUILDINGS OF POITOU, IN FRANCE.

SOME time since Mr. J. H. Parker, in continuation of a memoir read during the last Session of the Society of Antiquaries of London, upon the principal Buildings of the Middle Ages in the West of France, and particularly in the county of Anjou, addressed a second letter to Captain Smyth, upon the buildings of the same age and character in Poitou.

The object of Mr. Parker's paper was two-fold:—

1. To show the provincial character of the buildings of Poitou, which, though approaching more nearly to those of Anjou than any other, have still a certain distinct character of their own, as may be observed of most of the ancient provinces of France. This Poitevin character partakes of that of the north and of the south of France in rather a singular manner, as might perhaps be expected from its geographical position, the domical vaults being borrowed from the south, while much of the detail resembles rather that of the north.

2. To show that the buildings of Poitou, as of Anjou, are more advanced in style than those of Normandy at the same period, and still more in advance of England. Four churches are recorded to have been built in Poitou in the eleventh century, and the remains of these four are so much alike, and so much what might be expected from their history, that there seems strong reason to believe the existing structures belong in great part to that period. One of these, St. Hilary, is a very large and fine church, partly rebuilt in the twelfth century, or not completed till that time. St. Saviour in Poitou is another large and fine church, the walls of which are covered with paintings that cannot be later than the eleventh century, and an inscription appears to fix that date for it. We had no buildings of this magnificence in England until quite half a century later. The progress of architecture appears to have been from the south to the north, by several distinct lines and in successive stages, each having a certain character of its own. That part of the cathedral of Poitiers, which was built by Henry II., consisting of the choir only, is rather more advanced in style than buildings of his style in England; but not more so than the Hospital of St. John at Anjou, also built by him. Mr. Parker endeavoured to call the attention of English antiquaries to these English provinces of France, and exhibited a series of drawings of the buildings mentioned.

ANCIENT AND MODERN MARBLES.

THE following memoranda on marbles may, perhaps, interest some of your readers:—

The Parian, or *hard Greek Marble*, is the most white and beautiful of all statuary marble. The surface is remarkably smooth, and the grain composed of large scales. The statue of Minerva in the Vatican is of Parian marble.

Tyrian, or "*Greco Turchinecchio*," has a colour inclining to blue, and is remarkable for the fact that the steps of the "Scala Santa," taken from Jerusalem, are made of it.

Marmo Lunense, or *Carrara*, has a fine grain: the colour is more soapy than the Parian, containing occasionally dark and apparently metallic blotches. The quarries near Lima, a town or bay in Tuscany, on the confines of Liguria, were worked in the time of Julius Cæsar, and the marble precisely corresponds with the Carrara of the present day.

"*Giallo Antico*," or *Marmor Numidicum*, has a grain exceedingly fine, ground always yellow: the tints vary very considerably, the more dark the more valuable the marble. It has been compared by ancient writers to many different objects, such as ivory grown yellow with age, the golden rays of the sun, saffron, &c. Sometimes it displays a purple hue, and sometimes the lightest possible shade of yellow, some as bright as gold (*Giallo Dorato*), another orange (*Giallo Capo*), again, another sort the colour of a canary bird, which is extremely valuable and rare (*Giallo Paglia*); finally, another of a reddish tint called *Carnagione*, very beautiful and highly valuable when the colour, which is sometimes the effect of fire, is natural. There are six large columns in the Pantheon at Rome and one pair in the arch of Constantine composed of Giallo Antico.

Marmo Rosso Antico.—It is an extraordinary fact, that neither the ancient name of this beautiful marble, nor the country where it was quarried, is known. The colour is never bright red, but resembling liver, and covered with minute black crooked lines, like net-work: livid white blotches, characteristic of a "Brecia," on union-marble, appear on it occasionally, and sometimes livid white veins. The celebrated Fawns in the Vatican, in the Museum of the Capitol, and in the Palazzo Doria, are all of this marble.

Marmo Noro Antico.—Colour deep black, fine texture, marked occasionally with minute white short straight lines, but always broken and interrupted. Some fine specimens are in the museum of the capitol; but the largest masses in Rome are a pair of columns in the church of Regina Corla, and a table in the Palazzo Altempo.

Marmo Cipollino.—The colour of this is bright green on a yellow ground, or sometimes black on a white ground, and occasionally blended with a ground of yellow. This is a very rare marble. There are columns in the temple of Faustina and Antoninus in the Roman Forum, but the tints vary so much that it is difficult to define any: a kind with white ground and streaks of bright green is very beautiful, but very rare.

The above only forms a mere outline of the various antique marbles.

The marbles imported into this country from abroad are very various at this time, besides those of native Irish, some of which bear great affinity to the "antique."

Statuary White Marble is of the same quality, and from the same quarries as were in use in the time of Julius Cæsar. The texture is eminently beautiful—close and fine-grained, and in colour white as snow. When, however, it is perfectly *pure*, the value is very great: this occurs so rarely that any price is paid for a block opened, so that the quality may be seen.

Veined White Marble.—The texture is somewhat of statuary, close grained, but streaked with blue and black marks.

Bianca Chiara, or *Sicilian.*—This marble was comparatively unknown in England until introduced by the late Sir Francis Chantrey, who gave it the English name of "Sicilian," though it is well known to come from Tuscany, adjoining the statuary quarries. The ground is generally of a bluer cast than "veined," with "dots" of blue or black, instead of "streaks."

Porte Venere, or *Black and Gold Marble*, is a very beautiful black marble, with veins of gold or yellow, variegated all over it. The brilliant gold-like colour has caused it to be highly esteemed and given its English name.

Dove Marble, is as its name implies, "Dove," delicately marked with white blotches. The texture is close and fine.

Bardiglio Marble is somewhat of the "Dove," but more decided in its marks, of either a faint blue streak, or, in some and more valuable kinds, the colour approaches almost a black on its dove-ground.

Siena is very similar to "Giallo Antico," in texture perfectly so, and occasionally in colour. It is highly and deservedly esteemed, and varies as much as the description of the Giallo Antico, to which I refer.

I have lately seen, at Whitehall-wharf, some beautiful blocks of coloured marbles,—"red," "yellow," "green," and a mixture or "rainbow" description: all are equal to "antique," and some seem new in this market; also some Irish green, the colours of which may in part be likened to "malachite." It is very doubtful, if the ancients quarried blocks of black marble, of such large size as are now imported into London, from Galway. A MERCHANT.

METROPOLITAN BUILDINGS ADMINISTRATION BILL.

AS we forewarned our readers, nothing will be done with the Buildings Act this session. Lord John Manners's Bill, of which we gave an abstract in our last, has been dropped. We are forced to regard it as a very inefficient and objectionable Bill, and are glad, therefore, to get rid of it: it ought never to have been brought forward. We must strenuously protest against thus uselessly occupying the public attention and wasting the public money.

COMPETITION FOR THE LEEDS AND YORKSHIRE ASSURANCE BUILDINGS.—We understand that there were fifty-four designs submitted, and the directors having availed themselves of the assistance of an architect, awarded the premiums as follows:—*The* first premium of 50*l.* to Mr. W. B. Gingell, of Bristol; the second premium of 25*l.* to Mr. E. H. Martineau, of London; and an additional premium of 25*l.* to Mr. J. Dobson, of Leeds. The selected design is to be immediately carried out under the superintendence of the architect.

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